

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please cancel claims 2-3, 10-11, 18-19, and 23-24.

Please amend claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16-17, 20-22, and 25-27 as indicated below.

1. (Currently Amended) A computing system comprising:  
a first node coupled to a first communication link; and  
a second node coupled to the first node via said link;  
wherein the first node is configured to:  
convey a plurality of data packets of a first type to the second node via the link, each of  
said packets being conveyed according to a predetermined schedule;  
detect an inter-node communication message is available for transmission; and  
insert said message within one of said data packets;  
wherein the first node is configured to insert said message within one of said data packets  
responsive to determining the message does not exceed a predetermined size, and  
wherein in response to determining the message exceeds said size, the first node is  
configured to:  
partition the message into a first plurality of blocks, each of said blocks being less  
than or equal to said size;  
encode the first plurality of blocks into a second plurality of blocks, said second  
plurality being greater than said first plurality; and  
insert each of the encoded blocks within a different one of said packets.
2. (Cancelled).
3. (Cancelled).
4. (Currently Amended) The computing system of claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein the first node is  
further configured to generate pseudo-header information corresponding to said message and  
convey said pseudo-header information to said second node with said packets.

5. (Original) The computing system of claim 4, wherein said pseudo-header information is selected from the group consisting of: a unique message identifier corresponding to said message, a message type indication, a message length indication, and a sequence number corresponding to each block.
6. (Currently Amended) The computing system of claim 3 1, wherein subsequent to receiving any combination of a number of the encoded blocks equal to the first plurality, the second node is configured to reconstruct the message.
7. (Original) The computing system of claim 6, wherein the link comprises a heartbeat network, and wherein the system further comprises a data network interconnect coupled to the first node and the second node.
8. (Currently Amended) The computing system of claim 3 1, wherein the first node is configured to encode the first plurality of blocks pursuant to an erasure code algorithm.
9. (Currently Amended) A method of inter-node communication comprising:  
conveying a plurality of data packets of a first type from a first node to a second node via a communication link, each of said packets being conveyed according to a predetermined schedule;  
detecting in the first node an inter-node communication message is available for transmission; and  
inserting said message within one of said data packets, wherein said inserting is responsive to determining the message does not exceed a predetermined size; and wherein in response to determining the message exceeds said size:  
partitioning the message into a first plurality of blocks, each of said blocks being less than or equal to said size;  
encoding the first plurality of blocks into a second plurality of blocks, said second plurality being greater than said first plurality; and

inserting each of the encoded blocks within a different one of said packets.

10. (Cancelled).
11. (Cancelled).
12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 44 9, further comprising generating pseudo-header information corresponding to said message and conveying the pseudo-header information to said second node within said packets.
13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said pseudo-header information is selected from the group consisting of: a unique message identifier corresponding to said message, a message type indication, a message length indication, and a sequence number corresponding to each block.
14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 44 9, further comprising reconstructing the message subsequent to receiving any combination of a number of the encoded blocks, said number being at least equal to the first plurality.
15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the link comprises a heartbeat network, and wherein the system further comprises a data network interconnect coupled to the first node and the second node.
16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 44 9, wherein said encoding is pursuant to an erasure code algorithm.
17. (Currently Amended) A node configured for inter-node communication, said node comprising:

a first component configured to convey a plurality of data packets of a first type via a communication link, each of said packets being conveyed according to a predetermined schedule; and

a second component configured to:

detect an inter-node communication message is available for transmission; and  
responsive to determining the message does not exceed a predetermined size,

convey said message to said first component for insertion in one of said data packets;

responsive to determining the message exceeds said size:

partition the message into a first plurality of blocks, each of said blocks being less than or equal to said size;

encode the first plurality of blocks into a second plurality of blocks, said second plurality being greater than said first plurality; and

convey each of said encoded blocks to said first component for insertion within a different one of said packets.

18. (Cancelled).

19. (Cancelled).

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~computing system node~~ node of claim 49 17, wherein the second component is further configured to generate pseudo-header information corresponding to said message, said pseudo-header information being selected from the group consisting of: a unique message identifier corresponding to said message, a message type indication, a message length indication, and a sequence number corresponding to each block.

21. (Currently Amended) The node of claim 49 17, wherein the second component is configured to encode the first plurality of blocks pursuant to an erasure code algorithm.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~aeessible~~ readable medium comprising program instruction, said instructions being executable to:

convey a plurality of data packets of a first type from a first node to a second node via a communication link, each of said packets being conveyed according to a predetermined schedule;

detect in the first node an inter-node communication message is available for transmission; and

insert said message within one of said data packets responsive to determining the message does not exceed a predetermined size;

responsive to determining the message exceeds said size;

partition the message into a first plurality of blocks, each of said blocks being less than or equal to said size;

encode the first plurality of blocks into a second plurality of blocks, said second plurality being greater than said first plurality; and

insert each of the encoded blocks within a different one of said packets

23. (Cancelled).

24. (Cancelled).

25. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~aeessible~~ readable medium of claim 24 22, wherein said program instructions are further executable to generate pseudo-header information corresponding to said message and convey the pseudo-header information to said second node within said packets, said pseudo-header information being selected from the group consisting of: a unique message identifier corresponding to said message, a message type indication, a message length indication, and a sequence number corresponding to each block.

26. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~aeessible~~ readable medium of claim 24 22, wherein the program instructions are further executable to enable the second node to reconstruct the

message subsequent to receiving any combination of a number of the encoded blocks, said number being at least equal to the first plurality.

27. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~accessible~~ readable medium of claim 26, wherein said program instructions are executable to encode said blocks pursuant to an erasure code algorithm.